

***Pandemic Preparedness Coordinating Committee  
Draft Minutes  
August 18, 2006***

**Present:** Mark Andrew, Christen Bergeron, Mary Ann Cooney, Kathy Doult, Jennifer Harper, Denise Horrocks, Jose Montero, Sue Prentiss, Fred Rusczek, Fred von Recklinghausen, Commissioner John A. Stephen, Recording Secretary Jennifer Ritchings.

**1. Opening and Purpose**

Mary Ann Cooney, Director, Division of Public Health Services opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

**2. Overview of AHR Status**

Director Cooney noted that many of the All Hazard Regions have been making very good progress. She noted that she and the Commissioner recently visited the AHR meeting in Laconia. She said that members of the group were very enthusiastic about getting the job done because they see the importance of Pandemic Planning. They are already meeting the benchmarks and recognizing some of the areas of that will be question marks for many AHRs such as volunteerism and special populations.

**3. Accountability Structure**

Director Cooney shared information about the structure for accountability for the AHRs. She noted that they are structured around four areas:

- Assessment
- Planning
- Tabletop
- Training and Public Education

Progress reports on these areas will be submitted to the State and the Technical Assistance contractor on a monthly basis. This will help to track that the AHRs are meeting the objectives. Mary Ann also reviewed the activities under each of the four areas such as completing local assessments, completing inventories, holding AHR meetings, developing the Regional plans, completing tabletop exercises and the after-action reports, and much more.

Fred Rusczek noted that he thought the fact that Mary Ann, Commissioner Stephen, and Jose are making an effort to attend a meeting in each of the AHRs is a very good thing, especially with such busy schedules. He said that it helps to improve communications between the regions and the state. Mary Ann Cooney replied that they feel it is very important to be there since this is a new initiative with so many unknowns and questions. She said that it helps for the regions to be able to ask questions. She said

that it is important, as they move to the next step of looking at statutory authority, to be having the discussion and making decisions collaboratively.

#### 4. **Phase II Pan Flu Plan**

Director Cooney noted that the State application for the Phase II Pan Flu funds is due on August 31. The application is based on the CDC guidance with adaptations for the needs of New Hampshire. 77% of the funds will go to support local activities such as continued planning activities and exercises and POD Supplies. The remaining 23% will go to support state activities such as purchasing lab equipment and supplies, training materials and expenses, brochures and posters, and travel and overtime. The CDC set five priority areas and Director Cooney shared some of the activities under each priority.

##### Priority 1: State & Local Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Assessments

- State assessment
- Local Assessment
- Legislation

##### Priority 2: Pandemic Influenza Exercise Program

- Strategic National Stockpile Exercise – April 2007
- Cross-border Exercise – ME, VT, MA, Canada

Jose noted that there has been communication with Canada looking at establishing MOUs between the States and Provinces. This is part of a larger border strategy managed by the CDC. The purpose is to create a unified approach along the US borders with Canada and Mexico. This discussion is in the beginning stages.

##### Priority 3: Antiviral Drug Distribution Plan

- SNS Stockpile Distribution
- NH Antiviral Stockpile
  - Letter of intent sent
  - Need to secure funds for storage etc

##### Priority 4: State Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan

- Revision due 02/07/2007
- Include Medical Surge
- Include ESAR-VHP
- Include tracking of hospital patients

##### Priority 5: Continuation of Prior Requirements

- State activities
  - Director of Homeland Security
  - Governor
  - COOP

Sue Prentiss asked about antivirals for first responders. Jose Montero replied that the antivirals are only for patients at this time, not prophylaxis. He said that recommendations are changing constantly and discussions are ongoing on topics like what to do with contacts to a case, logistics, the 24-hour timeframe, and much more. Sue Prentiss asked how much the state needed in funding. Jose Montero replied they would be asking for \$8 million. Mark Andrew asked if the antivirals are part of the Shelf-Life Extension Program. Jose Montero replied that they are not part of that program, but ASTHO and others are working on it. He noted that another issue they are looking at is where to house the antivirals. They are looking at possible sites and examining what is needed to retrofit them. Fred von Recklinghausen asked what the characteristics for the buildings are. Jose Montero replied they are looking at things like accessibility, size, and climate control. Mary Ann Cooney replied that they are also looking at whether or not a forklift could access the building and regional placement of the antivirals to reduce shipping time. Commissioner Stephen added that they would need to be secure 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. He noted that Kevin Connor has been tasked with assessing possible sites. Jose Montero noted that another question to look at is keeping the locations confidential.

Commissioner Stephen asked whether or not a cross-border drill between NH, ME, MA was included in the distribution of Phase II funds. He said that the Governor is very interested in a drill that involves the State of Massachusetts. Commissioner Stephen agreed, but would like to expand this to other border states, including Canada. Mary Ann Cooney noted that there was about \$30,000 allotted for a drill including Manchester, Nashua, Keene, and Portsmouth that deal with the cross-border issues. Commissioner Stephen asked if that could be expanded. Fred Rusczek asked if there were fluidity to the funds for Phase II. Jose Montero replied that, by the August 31 deadline, they needed to be able to submit a budget along with the application. The 77% / 23% split needs to be described along with the priority areas. The extent of drills is not defined. Fred von Recklinghausen pointed out that, as the scope of the drill expands, so does the cost.

Mark Andrew asked if there were a thought to what the extent of the drill should be. Commissioner Stephen said that he would want to see more than just a Table Top Exercise. Kathy Doult pointed out that there is an upcoming regional Table Top Exercise in October that will deal with both Homeland Security and Health issues. This will help to identify some of the gaps related to cross-border issues.

Commissioner Stephen said that he would want something specific with NH and surrounding states, especially including the hospitals. For example, Hinsdale and Salem both experience surge across the borders. He noted that the drill could focus on those types of areas and would not necessarily need to be statewide. Mary Ann Cooney noted that there would be a New England Regional Planning meeting on August 28-29 in Rhode Island. She said that it might be possible to ask states in the region to set aside some funds to hold an interstate drill. Jose Montero noted that the National Governor's Association would be setting aside funds for drills by region. Commissioner Stephen said that commingling of funds might be an option. He said that it might be a good idea to ask regions to put aside a small amount of funds for a Regional Drill. Fred Rusczek

said that he was comfortable with going to a regional meeting with that idea, based on the recommendation of the group.

**ACTION:** Mary Ann Cooney made the motion to accept the plan for Phase II Pandemic funds to be submitted on August 31 with the addition of a Regional drill to be determined by the team. Kathy Doult seconded the motion. Discussion: Christen Bergeron asked if all of the details from the presentation were included in the application that would be submitted to the CDC. For example, the plan to seek legislation establishing statutory authority for the Regions. Mary Ann Cooney explained that the basic plan is sent, but not necessarily the complete details such as how the state plans to retrofit storage facilities for antivirals. Vote: The motion passed unanimously

5. **Next Meeting**

*September 13, 2006  
1:30 PM – 3:30 PM  
Brown Building, Room 460  
129 Pleasant St  
Concord, NH*

6. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Jennifer Ritchings, Recording Secretary.